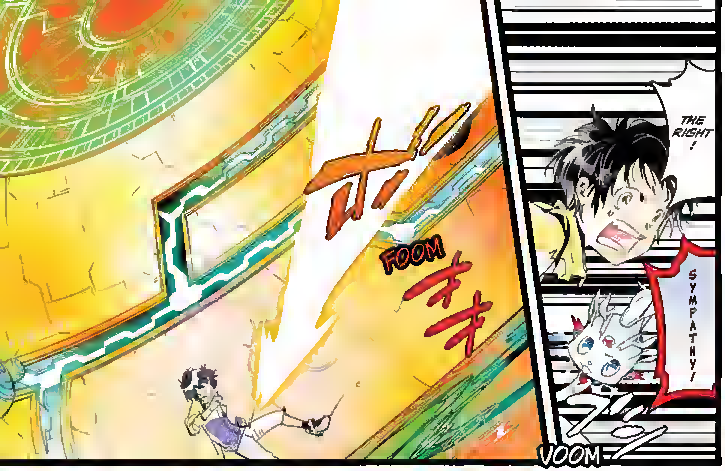
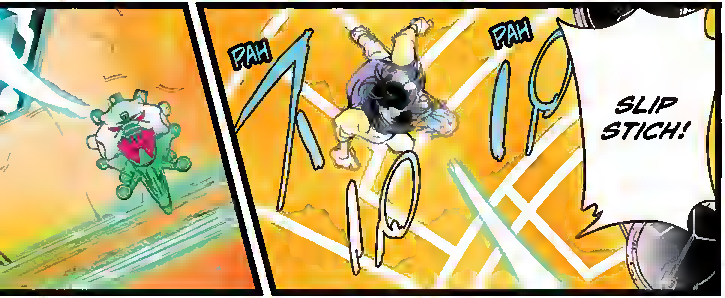
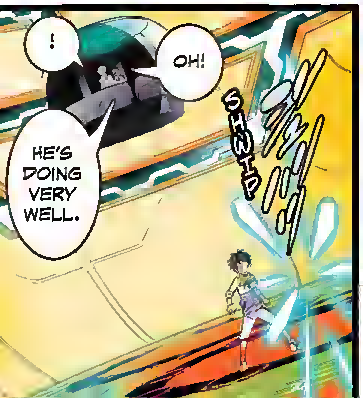
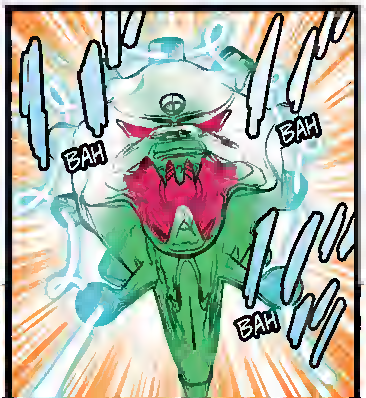
RUNNING STITCH!
TWO-SHOT!!
FOOM
CHAPTER 21: CATCH THAT FACE

ZIP
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
!!
VRRR
CHUTA! BEHIND YOU!!
SHIELD
FWOOOSH

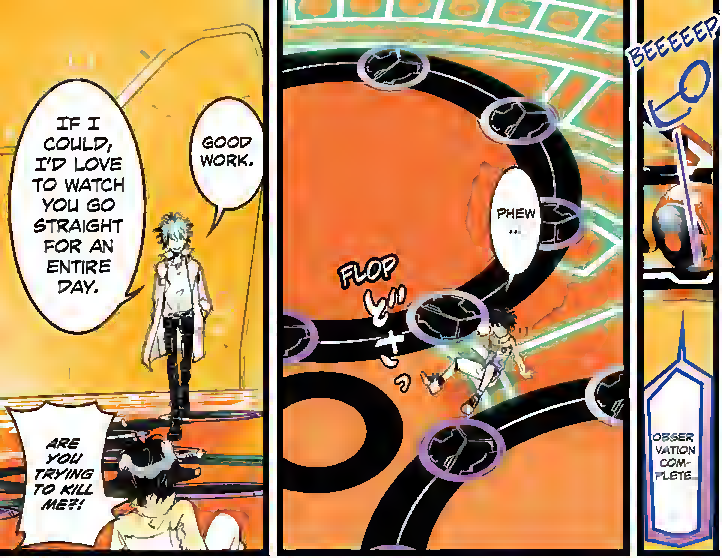

FOOM
THE RIGHT!
SYMPATHY!
VOOM

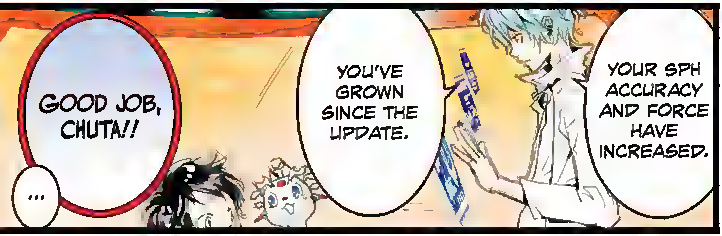

PAH
PAH
SLIP STICH!

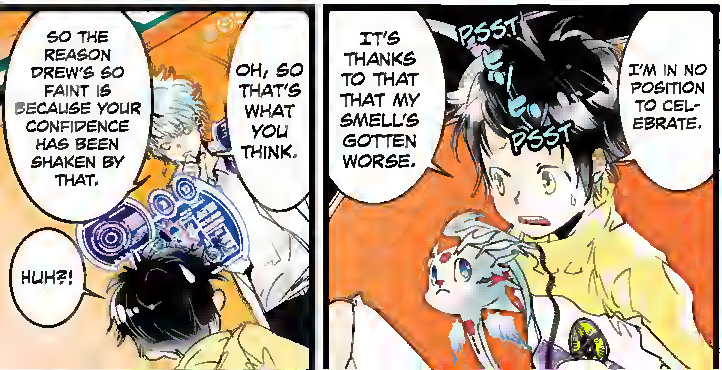

!
OH!
SHHD
HE'S DOING VERY WELL.


BAH
BAH
BAH

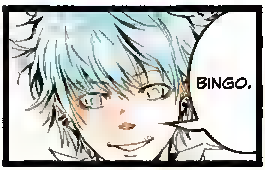
CHIEF.
IS TIME UP ALREADY ?
NO, I HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH CHUTA.
I PROMISED I'D TELL HIM ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THAT SPACE INCIDENT WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, BUT...
...I'VE BEEN SO BUSY I HAVEN'T HAD ANY TIME TO.
SHALL I END MY OBSER-VATION SESSION?
NO.
I'VE CHANGED MY MIND.
HUH. I SEE.
I'VE HEARD ABOUT HIS LITTLE PROBLEM WITH MISUZU.
I'LL TRY TALKING TO HIM WHEN HE'S A LITTLE MORE SETTLED DOWN.
MM-HM.
THAT FACE TELLS ME HE ALREADY HAS ENOUGH ON HIS MIND.
I HAD WORRIES LIKE THAT WHEN I WAS CHUTA'S AGE TOO.

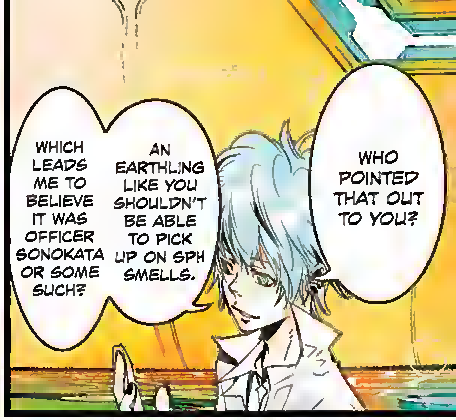

IF I COULD, I'D LOVE TO WATCH YOU GO STRAIGHT FOR AN ENTIRE DAY.
GOOD WORK.
ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME?!
FLOP
PHEW...
BEEEEEP
OBSERVATION COMPLETE

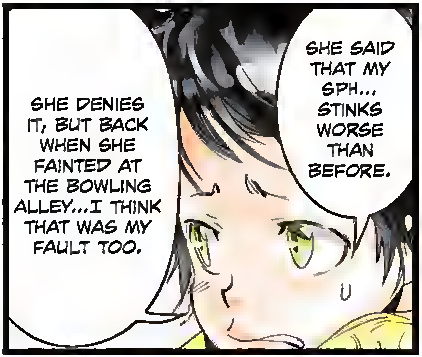

GOOD JOB, CHUTA!!
...
YOU'VE GROWN SINCE THE UPDATE.
YOUR SPH ACCURACY AND FORCE HAVE INCREASED.

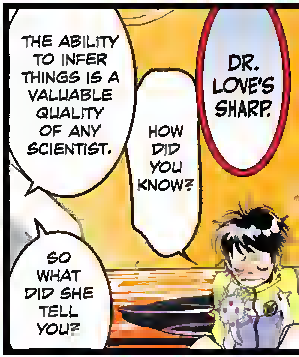

SO THE REASON DREW'S SO FAINT IS BECAUSE YOUR CONFIDENCE HAS BEEN SHAKEN BY THAT.
OH, SO THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK.
HUH?!
IT'S THANKS TO THAT THAT MY SMELL'S GOTTEN WORSE.
PSST
PSST
I'M IN NO POSITION TO CELEBRATE.

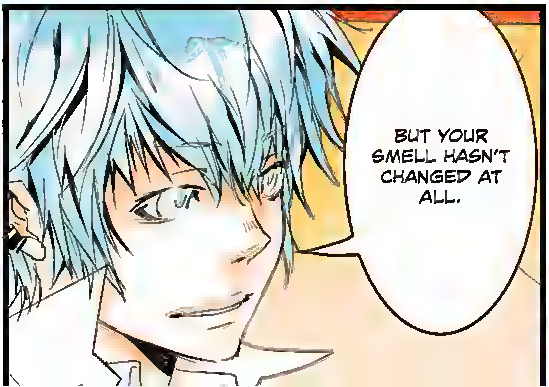
JUMP
WHA?!
!!


BINGO.

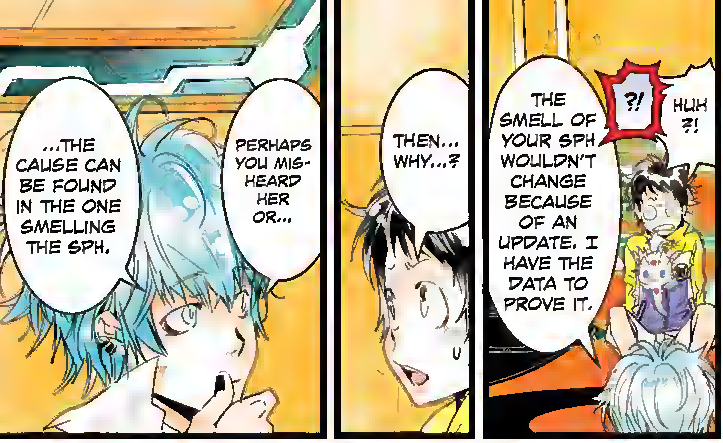

WHO POINTED THAT OUT TO YOU?
AN EARTHLING LIKE YOU SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO PICK UP ON SPH SMELLS.
WHICH LEADS ME TO BELIEVE IT WAS OFFICER SONOKATA OR SOME SUCH?

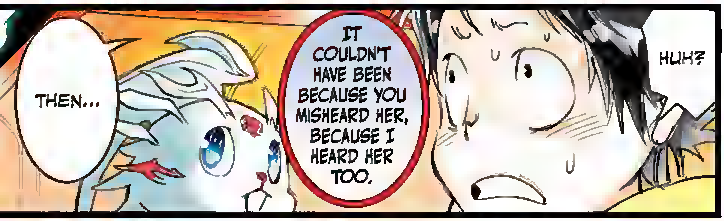

SHE SAID THAT MY SPH... STINKS WORSE THAN BEFORE.
SHE DENIES IT, BUT BACK WHEN SHE FAINTED AT THE BOWLING ALLEY...I THINK THAT WAS MY FAULT TOO.

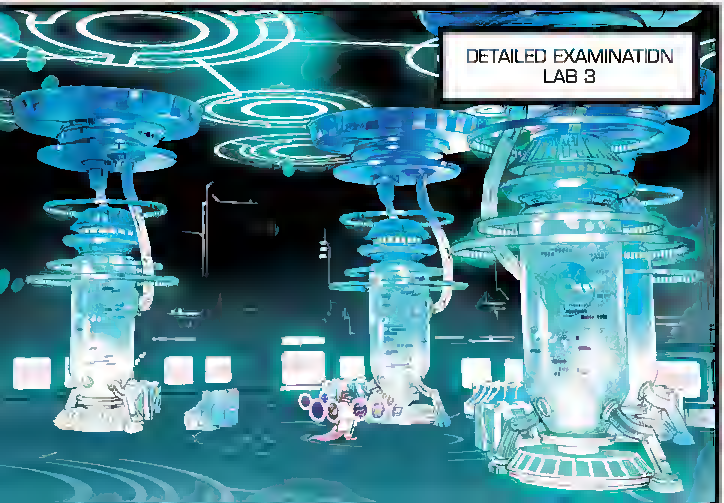

DR. LOVE'S SHARP.
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
THE ABILITY TO INFER THINGS IS A VALUABLE QUALITY OF ANY SCIENTIST.
SO WHAT DID SHE TELL YOU?

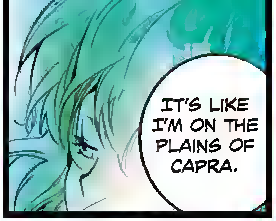

BUT YOUR SMELL HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL.

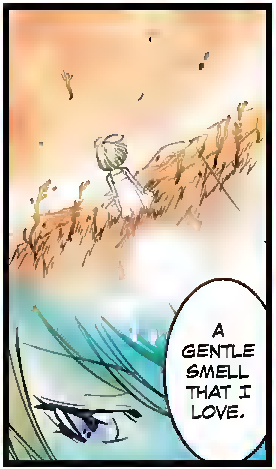
IT LOOKED THAT WAY.
UH...

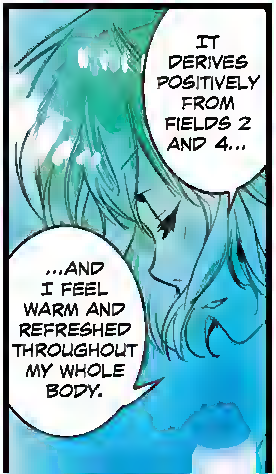

HUH?!
?!
THE SMELL OF YOUR SPH WOULDN'T CHANGE BECAUSE OF AN UPDATE. I HAVE THE DATA TO PROVE IT.
THEN... WHY...?
PERHAPS YOU MISHEARD HER OR...
...THE CAUSE CAN BE FOUND IN THE ONE SMELLING THE SPH.


HUH?
IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN BECAUSE YOU MISHEARD HER, BECAUSE I HEARD HER TOO.
THEN...


DETAILED EXAMINATION
LAB 3

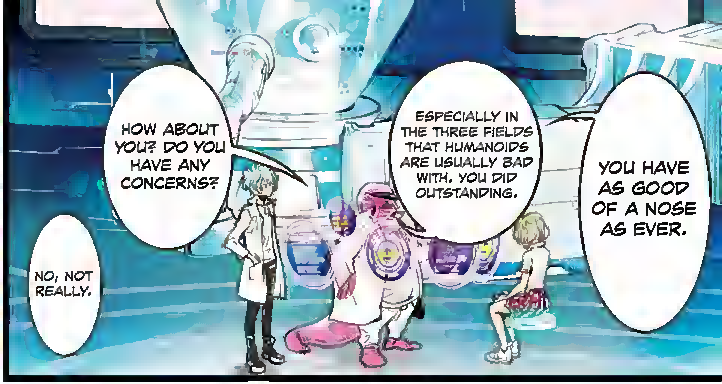

IT'S LIKE I'M ON THE PLAINS OF CAPRA.

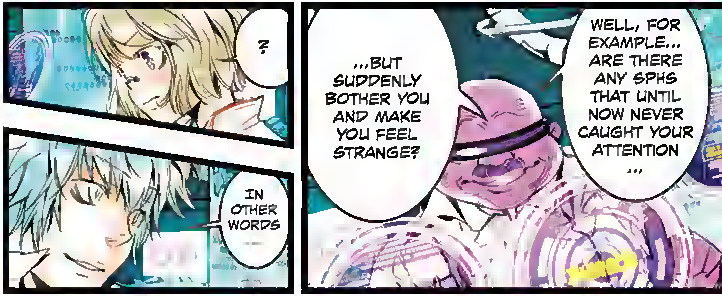

A GENTLE SMELL THAT I LOVE.

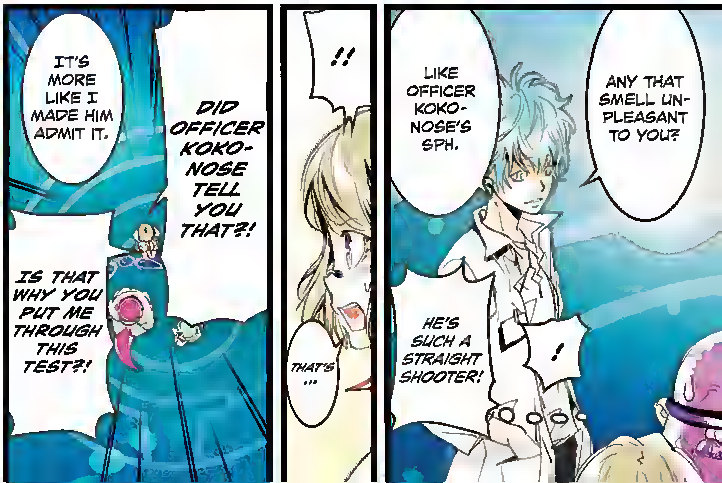

IT DERIVES POSITIVELY FROM FIELDS 2 AND 4...
...AND I FEEL WARM AND REFRESHED THROUGHOUT MY WHOLE BODY.

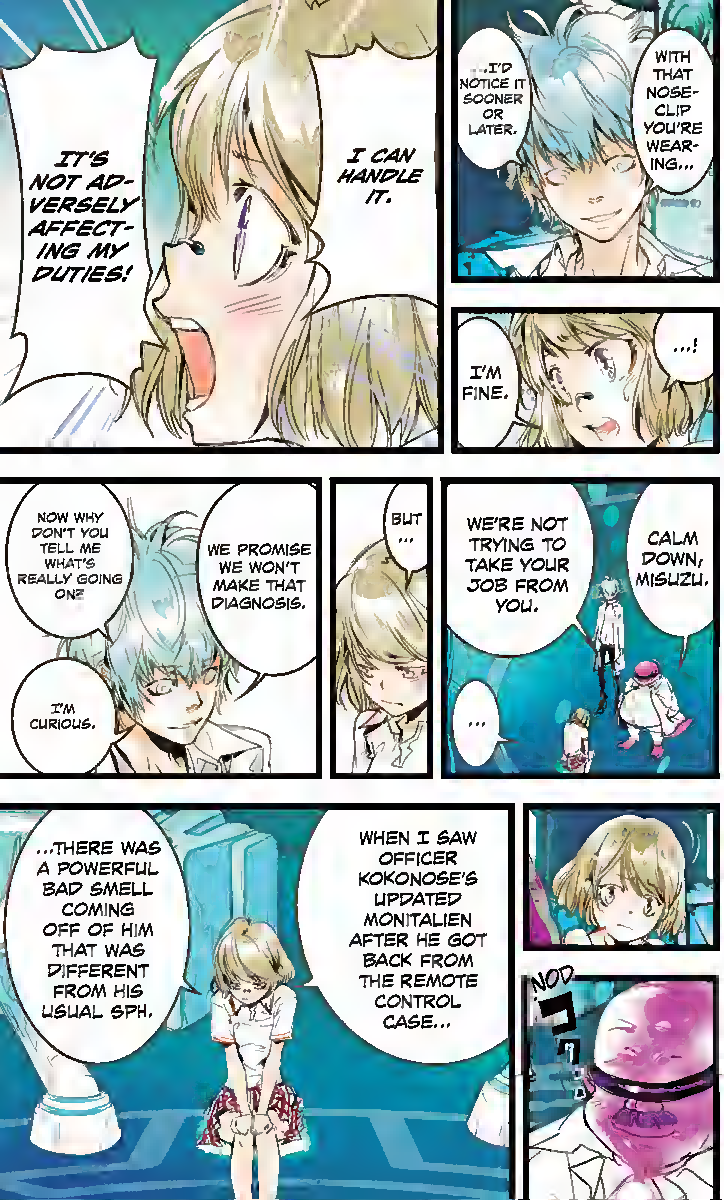
THIS SPH...

OFFICER KOKO-NOSE'S DONE BEING OB-SERVED.
HM?
AH!
NOW FOR THE NEXT SAMPLE SPH!
MM, GOOD ANSWER.
YES, SIR.
BOR-ING.
BE A GOOD BOY AND WAIT OVER THERE.
NEE HEE HEE. YOU MADE HER MAD, LOVE.
PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT TNE MONITOR!
DR. LOVE, YOU AREN'T SUP-POSED TO BE NERE!
I'VE FOUND NO IRREGU-LARITIES.

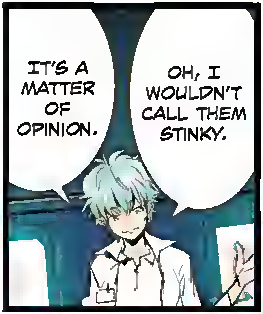

YOU HAVE AS GOOD OF A NOSE AS EVER.
ESPECIALLY IN THE THREE FIELDS THAT HUMANOIDS ARE USUALLY BAD WITH, YOU DID OUTSTANDING.
HOW ABOUT YOU? DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS?
NO, NOT REALLY.


WELL, FOR EXAMPLE... ARE THERE ANY SPHS THAT UNTIL NOW NEVER CAUGHT YOUR ATTENTION ...
...BUT SUDDENLY BOTHER YOU AND MAKE YOU FEEL STRANGE?
IN OTHER WORDS...
?


ANY THAT SMELL UNPLEASANT TO YOU?
LIKE OFFICER KOKONOSE'S SPH.
HE'S SUCH A STRAIGHT SHOOTER!
!
!!
THAT'S ...
DID OFFICER KOKONOSE TELL YOU THAT?!
IT'S MORE LIKE I MADE HIM ADMIT IT.
IS THAT WHY YOU PUT ME THROUGH THIS TEST?!

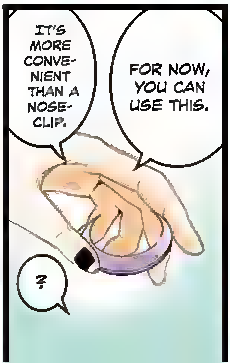

IT'S NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTING MY DUTIES!
I CAN HANDLE IT.
...I'D NOTICE IT SOONER OR LATER.
WITH THAT NOSE-CLIP YOU'RE WEARING...
I'M FINE.
...!
NOW WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?
WE PROMISE WE WON'T MAKE THAT DIAGNOSIS.
I'M CURIOUS.
BUT ...
WE'RE NOT TRYING TO TAKE YOUR JOB FROM YOU.
CALM DOWN, MISUZU.
...
...THERE WAS A POWERFUL BAD SMELL COMING OFF OF HIM THAT WAS DIFFERENT FROM HIS USUAL SPH.
WHEN I SAW OFFICER KOKONOSE'S UPDATED MONITALIEN AFTER HE GOT BACK FROM THE REMOTE CONTROL CASE...
NOD

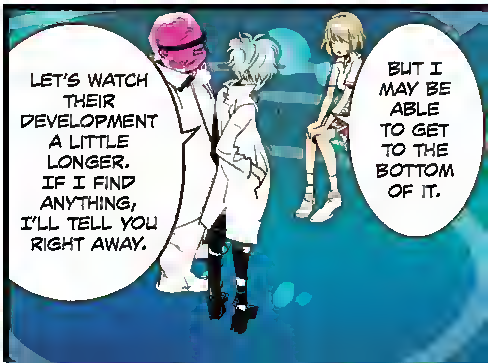
IT'S A RAW SMELL THAT STINGS MY NOSE AND MAKES IT FEEL LIKE MY BRAIN MIGHT SNAP.
IT'S DIFFICULT EVEN STANDING NEAR HIM WITHOUT A NOSECLIP ON.


OH, I WOULDN'T CALL THEM STINKY.
IT'S A MATTER OF OPINION.

I SEE. I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT IS.
THAT WOULD HAPPEN NEAR THEM...
THEN YOU SENSE IT TOO?!

IS THIS BAD SMELL ONLY COMING FROM CHUTA AND HIS MONIT-ALIENZ
YES.

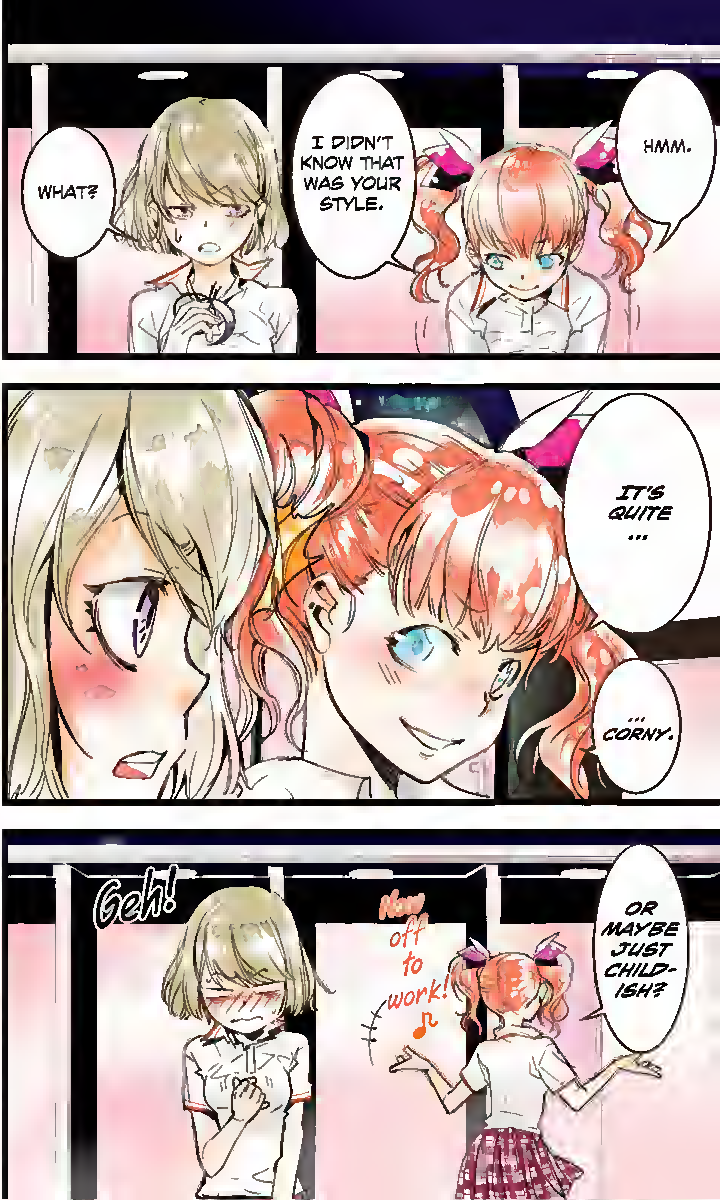

FOR NOW, YOU CAN USE THIS.
IT'S MORE CONVE-NIENT THAN A NOSE-CLIP.
?

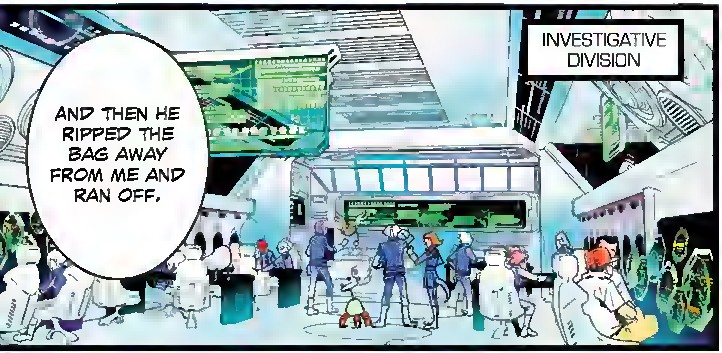

BUT I MAY BE ABLE TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT.
LET'S WATCH THEIR DEVELOPMENT A LITTLE LONGER. IF I FIND ANYTHING, I'LL TELL YOU RIGHT AWAY.

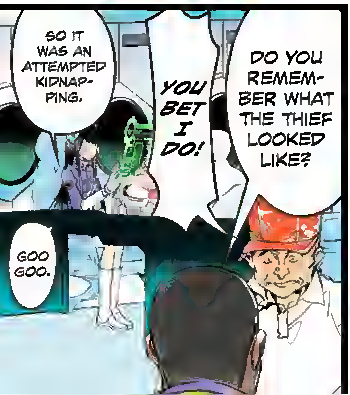
IT'S AN SPH CURTAIN DESIGNED AS A HAIR-PIN.
JUST WEARING THIS WILL CUT OFF SPECIFIC SPH'S.
...
SET IT TO OFFICER KOKONOSE'S SPH AND HIS WILL BE THE ONLY ONE YOU CAN'T SMELL.
ARE THERE NO OTHER DE-SIGNS?
IT'S A LITTLE CHILDISH AND NOT MY STYLE.
THIS IS...
WHY THE LONG FACE...?

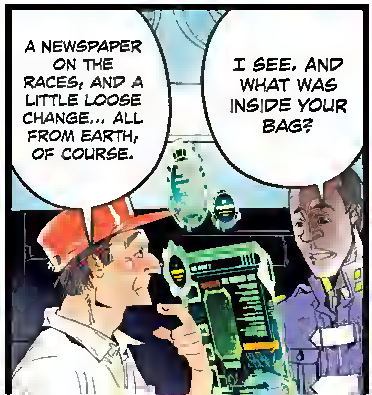
el DLIVE
エルドライブ

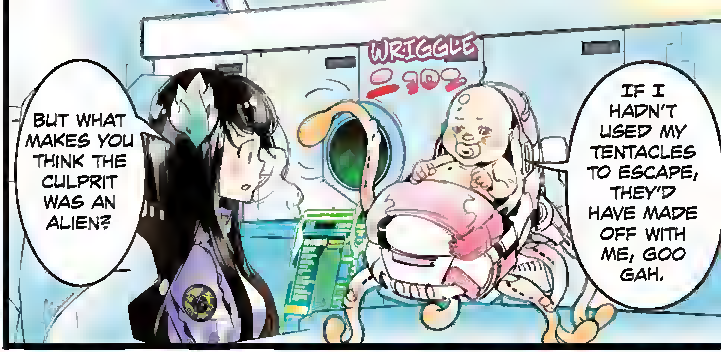
HUMANOID GIRLS' BATHROOM
FRSSH
110
WHAT'RE YOU WEARING THERE?
IT'S A...
...HAIR-PIN...

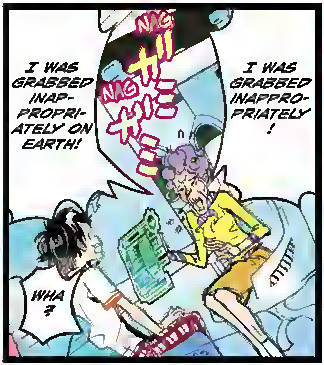

WHAT?
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS YOUR STYLE.
HMM.
IT'S QUITE ...
... CORNY.
Geh!
Now off to work! ♪
OR MAYBE JUST CHILD-ISH?

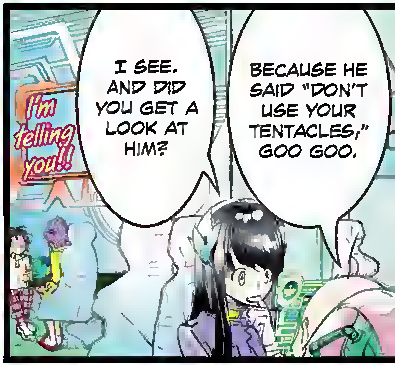

INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION
AND THEN HE RIPPED THE BAG AWAY FROM ME AND RAN OFF.

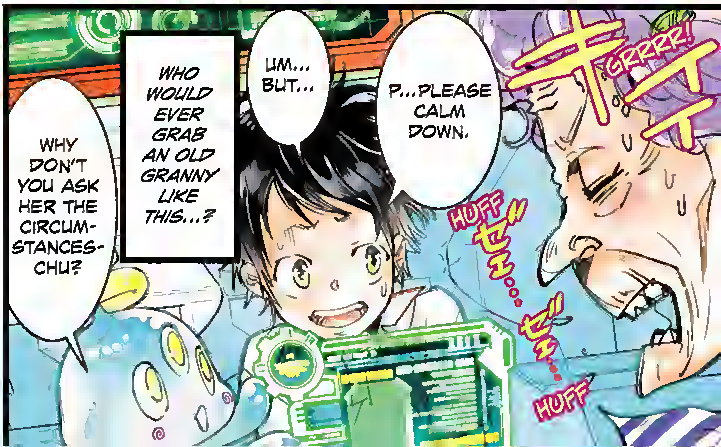

SO IT WAS AN ATTEMPTED KIDNAPPING.
YOU BET I DO!
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THE THIEF LOOKED LIKE?
GOO GOO.


A NEWSPAPER ON THE RACES, AND A LITTLE LOOSE CHANGE... ALL FROM EARTH, OF COURSE.
I SEE. AND WHAT WAS INSIDE YOUR BAG?

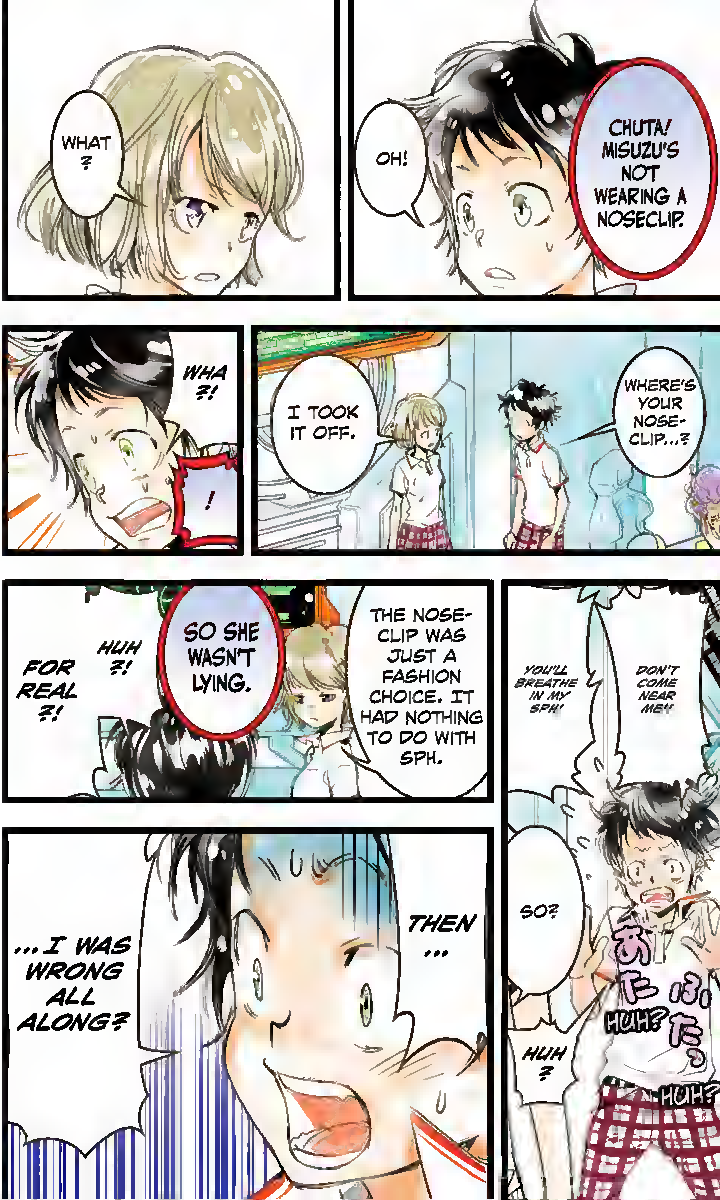

WRIGGLE
BUT WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THE CULPRIT WAS AN ALIEN?
IF I HADN'T USED MY TENTACLES TO ESCAPE, THEY'D HAVE MADE OFF WITH ME, GOO GAH.

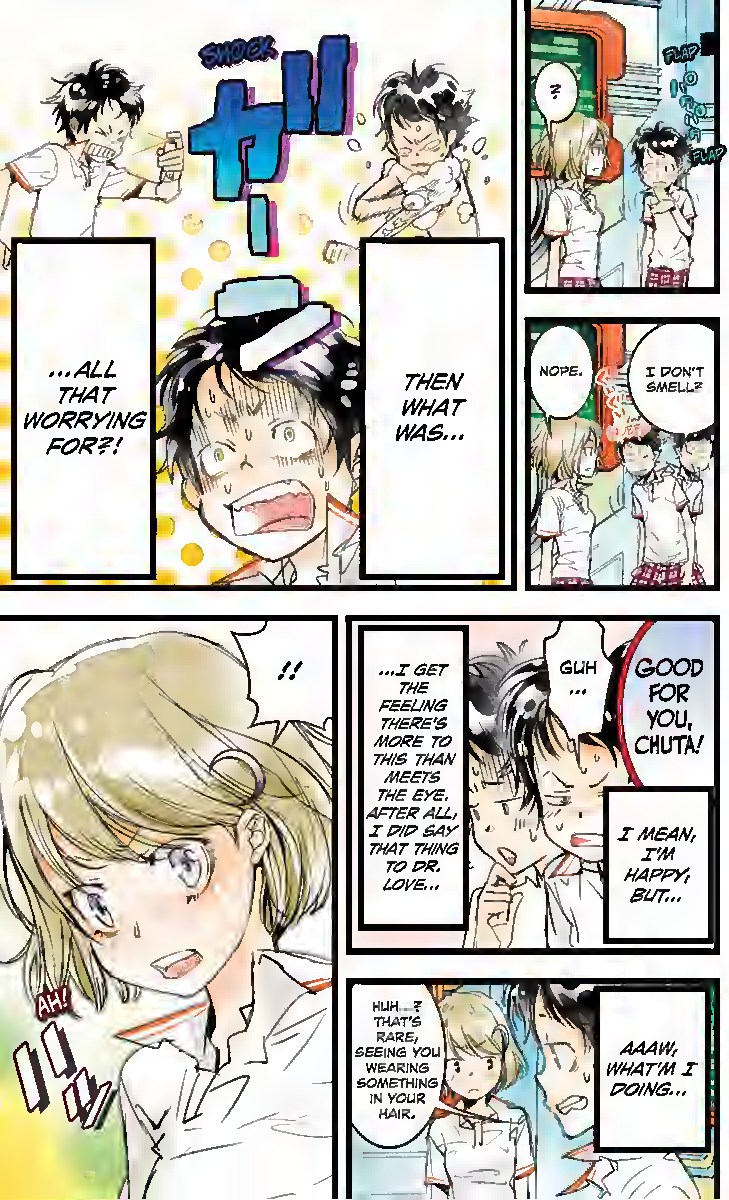

I WAS GRABBED INAPPROPRIATELY ON EARTH!
I WAS GRABBED INAPPROPRIATELY!
WHA?


I'm telling you!!
I SEE. AND DID YOU GET A LOOK AT HIM?
BECAUSE HE SAID "DON'T USE YOUR TENTACLES," GOO GOO.

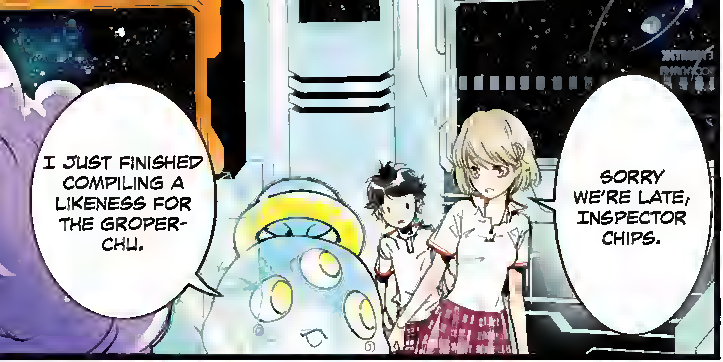

WHY DON'T YOU ASK HER THE CIRCUMSTANCES-CHU?
WHO WOULD EVER GRAB AN OLD GRANNY LIKE THIS...?
UM... BUT...
P...PLEASE CALM DOWN.
GRRRR!
HUFF
HUFF

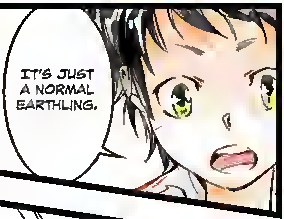
I WAS POKED RIGHT IN THE ELBOW! OOOH, THE HUMILI-ATION!
NAG
ガミガミ
NAG
ガミガミ
THE ELBOW...?
THAT'S ALL?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "THAT'S ALL"?! TO THOSE OF US FROM PLANET JAECKIH, OUR ELBOWS ARE OH PAR WITH EARTHLINGS' BREASTS!
HUH? BREASTS?!
AH!
I... I'M SO SORRY!!
CLATTER
ガラガラ
キィィ
SHRIEEEK!
I'M DONE WITH YOU! I'M GOIHG TO TALK TO THIS HANDSOME OHE HERE!
LEAVE THIS TO ME-CHU.
OKAY, I'M GOING TO CREATE A LIKENESS OF THE CULPRIT, SO WOULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE FOR ME WHAT HE LOOKED LIKE?
HEE-HEE!
ヒョヒョ
ヒョヒョ
HE?
GOOD MORNING.
G...
GOOD MORN-ING.
OH.
I JUST CAN'T GET USED TO... THESE SPACE CRIMES...
Thanks...

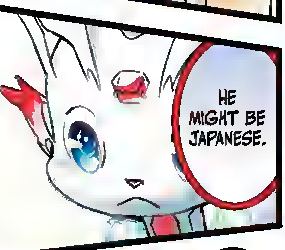

WHAT ?
OH!
CHUTA! MISUZU'S NOT WEARING A NOSECLIP.
WHA ?!
!
I TOOK IT OFF.
WHERE'S YOUR NOSE-CLIP...?
FOR REAL ?!
HUH ?!
SO SHE WASN'T LYING.
THE NOSE-CLIP WAS JUST A FASHION CHOICE. IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SPH.
YOU'LL BREATHE IN MY SPH!
DON'T COME NEAR ME!
SO?
HUH ?
HUH?
...I WAS WRONG ALL ALONG?
THEN ...


SHOCK
...ALL THAT WORRYING FOR?!
THEN WHAT WAS...
?
FLIP
FLIP
NOPE.
I DON'T SMELL?
GOOD FOR YOU, CHUTA!
GUH...
...I GET THE FEELING THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE. AFTER ALL, I DID SAY THAT THING TO DR. LOVE...
I MEAN, I'M HAPPY, BUT...
!!
AH!
HUH...? THAT'S RARE, SEEING YOU WEARING SOMETHING IN YOUR HAIR.
AAAW, WHAT'M I DOING...

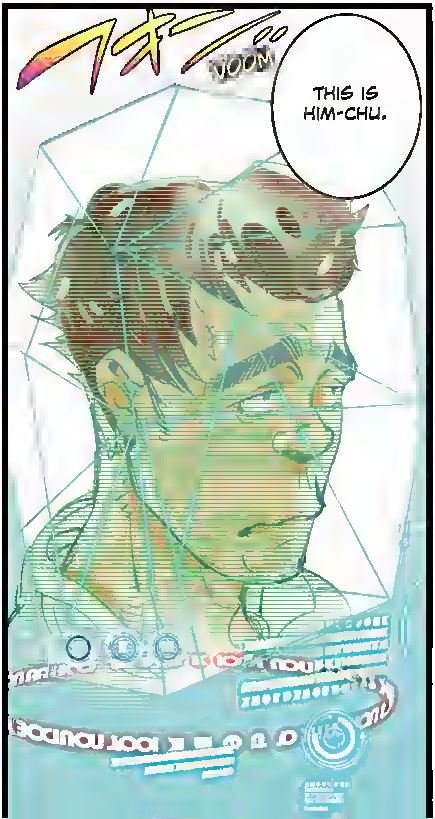
I KNOW IT'S CHILDISH!
HUH?
?
UH... I MEAN!
I'M NOT REALLY FOND OF IT.
IF YOU'RE NOT FOND OF IT, THEN WHY ARE YOU WEARING IT?
IT'S FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE AND STUFF. .
AND STUFF...?
FORGET IT.
PLEASE DON'T TOUCH ME.
...?
BUT...
...IT LOOKS NICE ON HER.

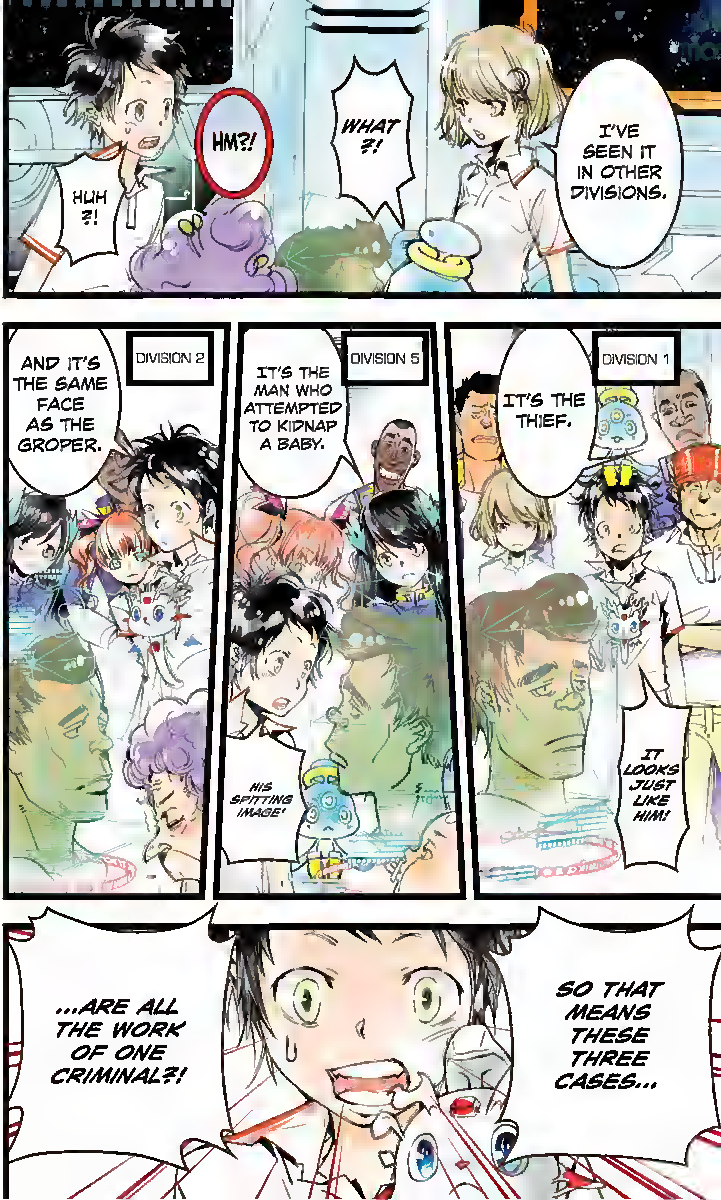

I JUST FINISHED COMPILING A LIKENESS FOR THE GROPER-CHU.
SORRY WE'RE LATE, INSPECTOR CHIPS.

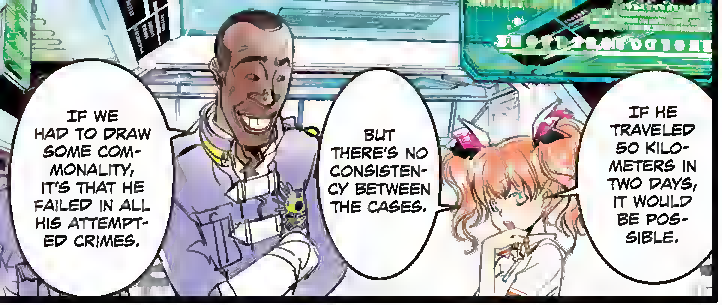

IT'S JUST A NORMAL EARTHLING.

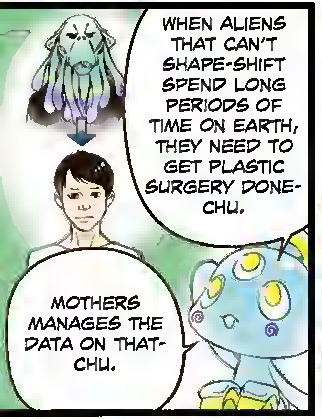

HE MIGHT BE JAPANESE.

THIS FACE...

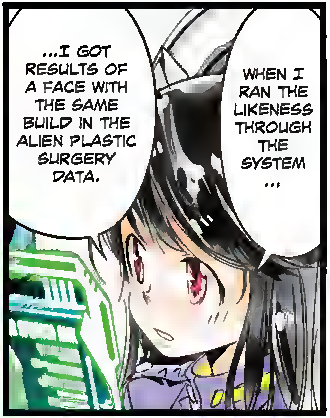

ZOOM
THIS IS HIM-CHU.

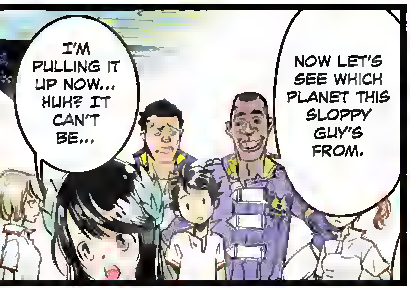

I'VE SEEN IT IN OTHER DIVISIONS.
WHAT ?!
HM?!
HUH ?!
DIVISION 1
IT'S THE THIEF.
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE HIM!
DIVISION 5
IT'S THE MAN WHO ATTEMPTED TO KIDNAP A BABY.
HIS SPITTING IMAGE!
DIVISION 2
AND IT'S THE SAME FACE AS THE GROPER.
SO THAT MEANS THESE THREE CASES...
...ARE ALL THE WORK OF ONE CRIMINAL?!

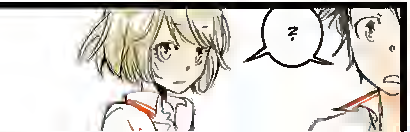

IF WE HAD TO DRAW SOME COMMONALITY, IT'S THAT HE FAILED IN ALL HIS ATTEMPTED CRIMES.
BUT THERE'S NO CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE CASES.
IF HE TRAVELED 50 KILOMETERS IN TWO DAYS, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

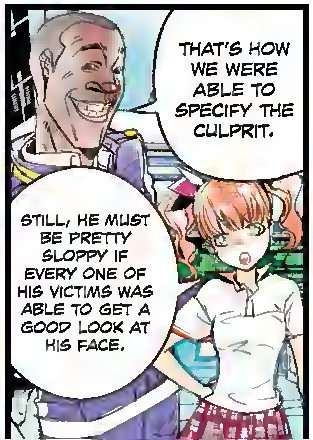

WHEN ALIENS THAT CAN'T SHAPE-SHIFT SPEND LONG PERIODS OF TIME ON EARTH, THEY NEED TO GET PLASTIC SURGERY DONE-CHU.
MOTHERS MANAGES THE DATA ON THAT-CHU.

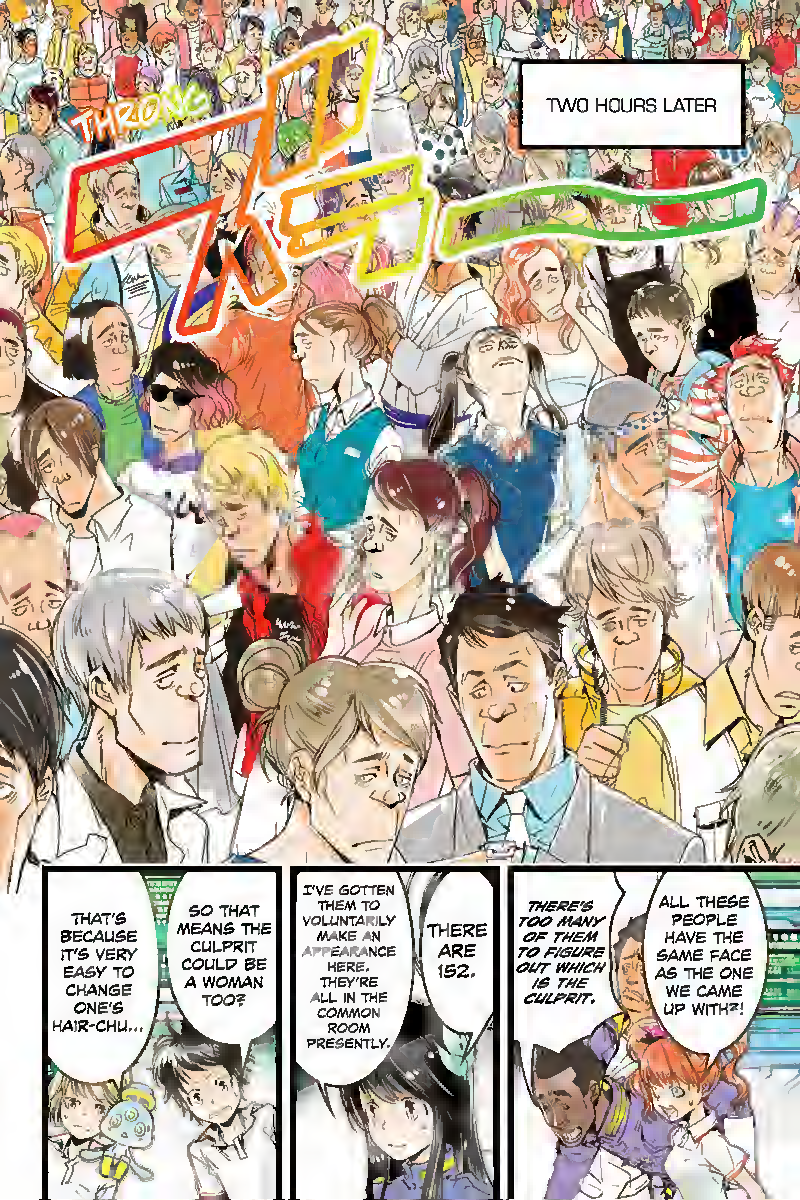
PLASTIC SURGERY DATA?


WHEN I RAN THE LIKENESS THROUGH THE SYSTEM ...
...I GOT RESULTS OF A FACE WITH THE SAME BUILD IN THE ALIEN PLASTIC SURGERY DATA.


I'M PULLING IT UP NOW... HUH? IT CAN'T BE...
NOW LET'S SEE WHICH PLANET THIS SLOPPY GUY'S FROM.


?


THAT'S HOW WE WERE ABLE TO SPECIFY THE CULPRIT.
STILL, HE MUST BE PRETTY SLOPPY IF EVERY ONE OF HIS VICTIMS WAS ABLE TO GET A GOOD LOOK AT HIS FACE.


THRONE
TWO HOURS LATER
THERE ARE 152.
I'VE GOTTEN THEM TO VOLUNTARILY MAKE AN APPEARANCE HERE. THEY'RE ALL IN THE COMMON ROOM PRESENTLY.
SO THAT MEANS THE CULPRIT COULD BE A WOMAN TOO?
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S VERY EASY TO CHANGE ONE'S HAIR-CHU...
ALL THESE PEOPLE HAVE THE SAME FACE AS THE ONE WE CAME UP WITH?!
THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM TO FIGURE OUT WHICH IS THE CULPRIT.